Common techniques in teaching of reading

Jabborova Dildora[1], Mirsadullayev Miravaz[2]
[1]EFL teachers of Namangan State University, Uzbekistan

Email: jabborova_d@umail.uz

ABSTRACT

Reading is an activation of the prior knowledge that we already have in our mind. When we read any text, we use our knowledge of the world to understand the text. A typical reading class involves the reading of a passage followed by comprehension questions, vocabulary exercises, and grammatical exercises. In this article, we will discuss common techniques in teaching reading in relation to the reading class activities: pre-reading activities, during/whilst reading activities, and post-reading activities that teachers use in teaching reading comprehension lessons.

Keywords: reading, reading techniques, reading tasks, pre-reading activities, during/whilst reading activities, post-reading activities.

1. INTRODUCTION

Reading is a means of communicating information between the writer and the reader. In teaching English a reading part of the lesson can take different forms according to the needs of the learners. In most cases the purpose of reading is usually to get information; therefore, the extraction of information from the text should be of primary importance and language focus work comes secondary. Nowadays the reading approach suggests a combination of the so-called top-down reading (when a reader uses his/her own experience to understand a text) and bottom-up, or interactive reading. Readers interact with the text, calling upon their knowledge and experience to interpret the new information. There are different reading strategies that are related to effective comprehension of texts. Strategies refer to the actions that readers select to achieve their goals. For example, teachers activate background knowledge, using titles and illustrations to predict content, searching for main ideas, practicing various modes of reading, and guiding lexical guessing. Comprehension exercises include summarizing and interpreting, and a final task integrates or transfers the information beyond the text. There are different ways of reading. Extensive reading involves reading long pieces of text. As learners read, their attention and interest vary – they may read some parts of the text in detail or they may skim through other parts. Extensive reading is rapid reading for main ideas of a large amount of text. Intensive reading is reading for complete understanding of an entire text. Reasons for reading influence how we read, i.e. which reading skill we use. Skimming requires the reader to look for the main idea or the general gist of a passage. Scanning is a quick overview of the text, looking for specific details or information.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

Reading for Information

In reading for information (search reading), readers try to find out information to meet certain purposes that have been determined before. To find out the information quickly, readers can use clues like contents, indexes, and glossary that are in the books. By looking at these clues quickly, the page clues that are in contents and indexes will help the reader to find the information needed sharply and appropriately. In glossary, readers can find the definition of a certain term that they need. Moreover, in reading for information, readers only try to get certain information from the entire text without analyzing details of the text (Sudiana, 1996).

Mapping

Mapping is to identifying meaning of a text through features. Mapping, also called clustering or webbing, is a visual form of brainstorming. When readers actually see ways their ideas connect to the text, they begin to think more creatively. Mapping also helps readers check the logical relationships between ideas in the text. Mapping can be very effective technique, especially for the students who

prefer diagrams, charts, and pictures to large numbers of words. It is also useful for everyone trying to understand both the organization of a reading selection and the main ideas of that selection (Leo, 1994). Mapping can be done before and after the reading process takes place. Mapping before reading can help readers to activate their prior knowledge so that they can relate new information to the old one. Mapping after reading can help readers to find the relationship among ideas and terms that may make learning more efficient. Mapping before reading can activate reader's schemata about the text being read and mapping after reading can help readers to process information more deeply.

Skimming

Skimming is aimed at getting quickly the main ideas and the purposes of a reading selection (Leo, 1994). Skimming is a very useful aid to help students find out information wished quickly. In skimming, readers just see the text at a glance; readers just survey the text without carefully reading it. They only use the clues that are in the book to get the information needed. Before skimming, readers must remember the most important parts of a chapter, article, or a paragraph. When skimming, readers usually read the title and the opening sentence in a paragraph or a paragraph in an essay. They may also read over the middle part of the selection very quickly and pay attention to the underlined words or phrases and to names, dates, and numbers. At last, readers read the closing sentence of a paragraph or the closing paragraph of an essay.

Scanning

Unlike skimming that is looking for and getting the most important information, the main ideas of a text, scanning is aimed at looking for and getting the details, facts, numbers, and specific bits of information that are in the text (Leo, 1994). Readers apply scanning in reading to locate specific information and get an initial impression of whether the text is suitable for a given purpose. When scanning, readers do not follow the linearity of the passage to get the information wished. They simply let their eyes wander over the text until hey find what they are looking for, whether it be a name, a date, or a less specific piece of information (Grellet, 1992).

In reading most activities are directed at reader's prior knowledge, especially of building and activating reader's schemata before reading. Pre-reading activities are instructional activities carried out before students conduct the real reading activities. In pre-reading activities, activations are concerned with students' background knowledge, objectives of reading class, learning activities, and motivating the students (Mason and Au, 1990). The activities in a reading lesson often follow this pattern:

- pre-reading activities; an introduction to the topic of the text and activities focusing on the language of the text;
- while-reading activities: comprehension activities developing reading skills;
- post-reading activities: spoken or written activities which require the use of the language students have met in the text.

Activities of pre-reading are basically the same as the preparation stage (Finn, 1985). In this stage, teachers try to activate students' schemata relating to the topic of the text, by presenting key words, asking questions related to the topic, or explaining briefly the contents of the text. The activation of students' schemata is aimed at making it easier for the students to comprehend the text to be read. Pre-reading is to tell students the purposes of reading and learning. According to Finn (1985) the purposes of reading include to: (1) get the students thinking along with the lines of the story they are about to read, and (2) identify particular information the students should be alert to or a question the students should keep in mind as they read the selection. Pre-reading is to motivating. Motivation in reading attracts students' attention to the text. Students want to read if reading satisfies their desires to conquer their world and if reading feeds their interests (Harris and Smith, 1986). The activities of pre-reading are activities aiming at facilitating the students' understanding about the reading text. In order to do this properly, teachers can activate the students' background knowledge, tell the students the objectives of reading and learning activities, and motivate the students in the beginning of reading class.

During reading activities are the activities that a reader does while reading takes place. To maximize reader interactions to a text, readers should be guided during reading activities. Greenwood (1981) suggests five activities to do in while reading. First, readers identify main idea of the text, through giving a title, selecting the most appropriate title, and identifying topic sentence through skimming. Second, readers find the details in the text, through scanning the text, and finding specific

information. Third, readers follow a sequence by relating items in a particular order or process. Fourth, readers infer from the text by trying to understand the text using their schemata and experience. Fifth, readers recognize the discourse patterns by applying all their linguistic and non-linguistic knowledge to understand the text holistically.

Post-reading activities are the activities conducted by a reader after reading. Tierney and Cunningham (1989) point out that post-questions, feedback, and group and whole-class discussions are activities that can be done in the phase of post- reading activities. The activities function to check students' comprehension about the text being read. The activity of post-reading can also be in the forms of discussion. Students are asked to discuss the writer's ideas. This discussion can be in a group or whole-class discussion.

K. Westerfield (2012) suggests the following pre-reading, while-reading and post-reading (follow-up) activities to accompany a text.

Pre-reading tasks:
- ❖ Semantic mapping/Cluster activity;
- ❖ Short answer/discussion questions to elicit students' own knowledge about the topic;
- ❖ Individuals/pairs write two questions they think will be answered in the text;
- ❖ Scan text for: length (# of pages?), visuals (What does the chart refer to?);
- ❖ Scan text for specific information within a given time frame;
- ❖ Skim for main idea of paragraph/text (moving from multiple choice to short answer questions at higher levels);
- ❖ Skim in order to choose or make up a title; Free writes/quick writes (2 minutes) to predict the contents of a reading passage after looking at title, reading, visuals, and first lines of paragraphs;
- ❖ Ask students to explain a concept or process;
- ❖ View/discuss a diagram or picture.
- ❖ Take a position on a statement or quote;
- ❖ Read the first sentence of each paragraph and predict the main idea of the reading;
- ❖ Scan text to find definitions of key vocabulary;
- ❖ Take a short excursion to a relevant location;
- ❖ Fill in a flow chart;
- ❖ Take a survey of students in class (what do people in the class think about xxx?);
- ❖ A cloze paragraph to complete on the topic of the reading;
- ❖ Fill in a KWL chart, listing: What I *know* for sure about xxx. What I *want* to know about xxx. Then compare statements with a partner. After reading, complete the 3rd column with what you *learned;*

While/post reading tasks:
- ✦ Fill in or draw charts, grids, maps, tables, outlines;
- ✦ Label a diagram;
- ✦ Correct a summary full of errors;
- ✦ Re-order scrambled sequence of events;
- ✦ Fill in blanks in a summary;
- ✦ Give, or choose from options, a title for a text;
- ✦ Decide whether a statement is True, False, or Don't know (information is not available);
- ✦ Decide whether a statement is True or False, and correct the False statements;
- ✦ Scan the text to find and underline examples of a language point, e.g. verb tense, reduced and full relative clauses, pronoun reference, passive voice, transitions/conjunctions, affixes, restatement;
- ✦ Put pictures in order;
- ✦ Re-order scrambled sections of text, paragraphs, or sentences;
- ✦ Read/Listen and take notes with outline (partially completed);
- ✦ Use to write a summary;
- ✦ Match headlines with articles from a newspaper;
- ✦ Write newspaper headlines for an article;
- ✦ Write subheadings for text sections;

- Draw a timeline of events;
- Listen to a lecture and relate it to the reading;
- Bring in a guest speaker; See a film, video, TV show, slides, or picture & relate it to the reading;
- Listen to an audio podcast & relate it to the text;

3. CONCLUSION

We can conclude briefly, in reading lessons teachers use common techniques in teaching reading in relation to the reading class activities: pre-reading activities, during/whilst reading activities, and post-reading activities in teaching reading comprehension lessons. Teachers activate background knowledge of students, using titles and illustrations to predict content, searching for main ideas, practicing various modes of reading, and guiding lexical guessing. Comprehension exercises include summarizing and interpreting, and a final task integrates or transfers the information beyond the text.

REFERENCES

1. Goodman, K. S. (at al) "The Reading Process". In Careell, P. L., Devine, J. and Eskey, D. E.,(Eds.) 1988. Interactive Approach to Second Language Reading. pp. 11 – 21.
2. Grellet, Francoise, 1992. Developing Reading Skills: A practical guide to reading comprehension exercise. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press
3. K. Westerfield (2012) Tasks for reading. University of Oregon.
4. Mason, Jana M. and Au, Kathryn H., 1990. Reading Instruction for Today. (2nd ed.). New
5. Jersey: Harper Collins Publishers Tierney, R. J. and Cunningham, J. W., 1984. Research on Teaching Reading Comprehension,
6. IN Richards C. Pearson and David P. Pearson (Eds.). A Handbook of Reading Research. London: Longman.